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TAROT FUNDAMENTALS

Lesson No. 18

BUILDERS OF THE ADYTUM

TAROT FUNDAMENTALS

Lesson Eighteen

THE CHARIOT

The title of this Key is directly related to the number 7 because the Pythagoreans, whose doctrine was known to the inventors of Tarot, called 7 the **vehiculum**, vehicle, of man's life. The symbolism of Key 7 is evidently an adaptation from the Pythagorean symbol; but Pythagoras probably learned it during his sojourn in India, for THE KATHOPANISHAD says:

"The Self is the rider in the chariot of the body, guided by the intellect as charioteer, drawn by the senses as powerful horses, controlled by way of the mind serving for the reins. Thus runs the vehicle over the course of experience. The Self thus conditioned by the senses and the mind is called the Enjoyer by those who know. He who is forsaken by the charioteer (intelligent discrimination) and has no idea of guiding the reins—his mind—in the proper manner, has no control over the senses and is like a driver of restive horses. He who has the intellect for his driver and the mind for proper reins, is able to reach the other end of the course, the highest essence of the All-pervading. THAT ever concealed in all, is never manifest, but is grasped by the sharp intellect of those who are trained to minute observation."

This quotation emphasizes the importance of what Tarot represents by the Magician. That Key is associated with Beth, the house. Hence a city is shown in the background of Key 7, to intimate that the discriminative power of self-consciousness is behind all that is shown in the foreground.

The buildings behind the wall of the city have towers surmounted by triangles or pyramids. These are red, and the towers themselves are masculine, phallic symbols. The true development of Will-power, symbolized by Key 7, has behind it the constructive function of self-consciousness. Our exercise of this function brings about a lifting-up or sublimation of the reproductive forces of the physical body. This is accomplished by a release of the subconscious force analytical psychology calls **libido.**

The wall is a stone fence. In front of it is a wind-break of trees like those growing in the Empress' garden—a living wall. Then comes the river, a wall of water. In the foreground is the chariot, a portable fence, carrying a rider wearing armor, another kind of fence. Thus the Key contains repeated references to the letter Cheth (ח).

The body of the chariot is a cube like that whereon sits the High Priestess. Review what is said of the cubic stone in Lessons 8 and 12. See also the explanation of the noun אבן, ehben, "stone", in Lesson 14.

To this add the fact that Qabalists associate the noun אב Ab, Father, formed from the first two letters of אבן with the aspect of reality they name Wisdom, to which they attribute: (1) the forces of the zodiac; (2) the life-force expressed in the perfect order manifested by astronomical phenomena. From the same source comes our life-force, which, as modern science demonstrates, is derived from the radiant energy of the heavenly bodies.

The cycles of transformation of this radiant energy within our bodies, and in the world of physical things which constitutes our environment, cause all phenomena within range of our experience. These cycles are represented by the wheels of the chariot which refer to the symbolism of Key 10, associated with the planet Jupiter, exalted in Cancer.

The direction East-Below, corresponding to the lower horizontal line at the rear of a cube facing an observer seated in the West, is assigned to Cheth. This is a combination of the direction Below (which is assigned to Gimel and the High Priestess) and East (which is assigned to Daleth and the Empress).

This line of East-Below joins the lower and eastern faces of the Cube of Space mentioned in THE BOOK OF FORMATION. It connects the lower end of the north-east vertical line (assigned to the Emperor) and the lower end of the south-east vertical line (assigned to the Hierophant).

It is opposite, and therefore complementary, to the horizontal line East-Above at the top of the cube. East-Above is the line at the junction of the upper face (assigned to the Magician) and the eastern face (assigned to the Empress). This line of East-Above is the one assigned to the Lovers. Note that it connects the **upper** ends of the lines of the Emperor (North-East) and the Hierophant (South-East) just as the line East-Below, assigned to the Chariot, connects the lower ends of the same two vertical lines.

What is intimated here is that the mental activities represented by Key 6 link together reason and intuition (Emperor and Hierophant) at the level of self-conscious mental activity represented by the Magician. On the other hand, the functions represented by Key 7 unite the powers of the Emperor and the Hierophant at the level of subconscious activity represented by the High Priestess.

Key 7 refers primarily to operations of the Life-power occurring at subconscious levels. They are combinations of creative imagination (East; Empress) and memory (Below; High Priestess). These activities link together the subconscious consequences of reason (North-East; Emperor) and intuition (South-East; Hierophant). These operations are those related to the sign Cancer which governs nutrition and digestion. Subconsciousness is the ruling power

in these functions (Moon, the High Priestess, governing Cancer); and the highest functions of what is known astrologically as "Jupiter", working through the solar plexus, or abdominal brain, are brought also into play.

This is important as showing that Key 7 has to do with the vehicle of personality, built by subconsciousness. Some have suggested that Key 7 ought to be named THE CHARIOTEER, and I have myself elsewhere expressed the view that this might be a better title. On the other hand, I know of none among older versions of Tarot which call Key 7 anything but THE CHARIOT, and, while it is foolish to value something for no reason other than that it is old, we may well ask why the title of the Key has never been changed.

Does it not seem reasonable that we may find the answer in the fact that the emphasis here is on the **vehicle**, considered as the portable "House of Influence"? Thus the body of the car is a cube, to indicate that the personal vehicle is no more than a particular shaping of the same materials which constitute its environment.

These materials flow into the enclosure provided by the personal vehicle as the river in the background of the picture flows into the scene. Like the same river, flowing out of the picture, the various cosmic forces flow out of the personal vehicle. None remains within it.

Four pillars rising from the body of the chariot support a canopy. The number 4 is the number of order and measurement. It refers also to the four elements: fire, water, air, earth. Each pillar is divided into two equal parts reminding us of the Hermetic axiom: "That which is above is as that which is below."

The point of division at the center of each pillar is surrounded by a ring. This is a symbol of Spirit, for the rings are circles, or zero-signs. The idea symbolized is that each of the four elements is encircled by the One Spirit.

The starry canopy represents the celestial forces whose descent into the physical plane through the activity of the four elements is the cause of all external manifestation. This canopy represents the forces which surround the earth and seem to be above us in the sky. It represents also the subtle metaphysical forces which are above the level of personality. It is therefore a symbol for what Eliphas Levi called "Astral Light". (See SEVEN STEPS, Lesson 1.)

A shield on the face of the car has the same significance as the letter name, the wall and the windbreak of trees, the river and the chariot itself. The symbol on the shield is one form of the Hindu **lingam-yoni**, typifying the union of positive and negative forces.

Above the shield is a variation of the winged globe of Egypt. It is gold to represent the power of the solar rays, and the wings are blue to symbolize the moisture of the atmosphere which brings these rays to earth.

The crown of the charioteer is ornamented with three golden pentagrams (See Lesson 13). Three are shown because the mental dominion we exert through right use of the power of speech does really extend over three planes or worlds.

The rider's fair hair is bound by a green wreath like that on the head of the Fool and having the same meaning. He is clad in armor like the Emperor. The crescents on his shoulders refer to the moon's rulership in Cancer. They are also symbols for the two aspects of the Life-power which Hebrew Wisdom calls Mercy and Severity. Hence there is a smiling face in the half-moon on the side of Mercy, and in the crescent on the side of Severity is a frowning countenance.

The charioteer's cuirass, or breastplate, is greenish-yellow to simulate brass, the metal of Venus. It signifies the protection afforded by right use of the power of the Empress who carries, you will remember, a shield as symbol of her protective function. The square on the cuirass represents order and purity, while the three T's of which it is made up refer to the limiting power of the planet Saturn, which planet is attributed to the letter T, or Tav.

The skirt below the armor is divided into eight parts, and the units of the design are geomantic symbols used in making magical talismans. The belt of the charioteer suggests the zodiac. Close examination will show the astrological symbol for Cancer in one of its panels and a crescent moon in another.

The charioteer's scepter is surmounted by a figure 8 combined with a crescent. This is a combination of the symbol over the Magician's head with the lunar crown of the High Priestess. Thus the charioteer's ensign of authority shows that his dominion is the result of a blending of the powers of self-consciousness and subconsciousness.

Key 7 is the end of the first row of Keys in your tableau and is a synthesis of them all. It tells you that the chain of events leading to your ability to express Will-power starts with the Magician. Acts of attention (Key 1) set going the associative function of subconsciousness (Key 2), and the result is the creation of concrete mental images which externalize as definite environmental conditions (Key 3).

The observation and orderly correlation of the images which present themselves to us as facts and circumstances is what we call reason (Key 4). This enables us to test our intuitions (Key 5) with the result that we make discriminations between the real and the unreal, and with the further result that we become aware of the differences between self-consciousness and subconsciousness and perceive their relation to superconsciousness (Key 6). This discrimination, worked out by subconsciousness by way of deduction and imagination, affects the body-building activities which give us our physical vehicles. Thus we become aware of the true nature of Will-power and perceive that the One Self is the rider in every chariot of personality.

By the invisible reins of the mind we **let** the Self guide the vehicle of personality. The result is that the motive-power of sensation is brought to rest, as are the sphinxes in this version, or the horses which draw the chariot in some older designs.

The sphinxes are propounders of riddles and so are the senses. By sensation we experience all the pairs of opposites—what we like, and what we dislike; what seems to be favorable to our aims, and what seems adverse. But when the One Self, through the intellect, guides the vehicle of personality, it controls the senses, and the result is security, safety and peace—as represented by the number 7.

This week spend some time in a deliberate endeavor to realize that your inner Self is above and beyond your personality. Try to understand that this Self is the true Actor in all that you do. Think of your personality as being merely a vehicle, having no power of its own, but only that flowing from the One Will, and taking form in the energy of the Astral Light. By repetition, this concept will become so habitual and natural that everything you think, say and do will be influenced by it. Thus will you be cultivating your field of personality.

Above all, watch your words. Say what you mean, and mean what you say. Get the dictionary habit and begin enriching your vocabulary with strong, positive, cheerful, hopeful words which express the highest truth you can think.

ALL POWER IS YOURS

Key 7, the Chariot, answers the fundamental questions of us all. What are we? Who are we? To know what and who we are is to have a clue to our high destiny. Though millions live and die without ever asking these two basic questions, let alone finding the answers, we must know the fundamental truth about human personality if we would be successful practical occultists.

First of all, we are not our bodies. Most of us know nothing about any body other than this physical vehicle. Some schools of occultism speak of higher bodies, etheric, astral and mental, and there is considerable evidence pointing to the actual existence of these finer vehicles. Yet, fine or gross, invisible or visible, whatever bodies we have are structures built from one fundamental substance which enters into composition of all forms throughout the universe. This is that same "stuff" which Eliphas Levi calls "Astral Light". In various gradations of fineness or grossness, in various octaves of vibratory activity, this substance enters into the composition of what we call "bodies". Yet it is but **One** substance, a flowing, ever-moving fluidic "stuff" pictured by the river in Key 7. This is the "Influence" referred to when the consciousness symbolized by Key 7 is called "The Intelligence of the House of Influence".

In Key 7, human personality is pictured as a chariot, a movable vehicle. The two wheels of the car represent the cycles of cosmic activity, great and small. The chariot is of stone to call attention to the word אבן, **ehben**, concerning which you have already had some instruction. But the most important clue is the shape of the car itself. It is a cube, and with this lesson you begin to learn something concerning the Cube of Space. Let us impress upon you the importance of this knowledge. Though at first it may seem abstract and difficult, from it there flow innumerable practical consequences.

Since the day of Pythagoras, the cube has been a symbol of the physical universe. Thus the cubical shape of the car, which is, remember, a symbol also of human personality, intimates the following idea: **The true body of man is the physical universe. By no means is it merely the localized structure of flesh and blood and bones we use during a single incarnation.**

One of the great modern physicists has written that there is a sense in which every atom and every electron is omnipresent, because it gives off radiations which ultimately travel to the utmost limits of space. He might have added that every atom and every electron is likewise a receiving station into which flow influences from every other point.

In a measure, we have arrived at mechanical proof of this. The telephone, telegraph, radio and television enable us to hear and/or see what occurs at the most distant points on earth. When we set up the proper conditions, we are able to be in consciousness anywhere on this planet, and by means of this extended communication we can change our own lives and the lives of others. By means of telescopes and other apparatus, we reach out in space to distant galaxies, and the knowledge gained has also its effect on history.

Ageless Wisdom says these mechanical inventions, like all other inventions, are simply adaptations of natural powers of the human organism. To bring our actual omnipresence within range of physical sensation, we have devised these tools, but the human body itself is a far better instrument for the same purpose. And, though experiments in extra-sensory perception are by no means complete, psychologists are beginning to accumulate in their cautious way much evidence for man's virtual omnipresence, and for his power to influence things and persons distant in space.

Over a period of thousands of years in the secret laboratories of the Inner School this line of research has been pursued assiduously by men and women who have given their whole lives to the study. Their accumulations of knowledge have been tabulated and checked, and many of them have been reduced to formulas. Like the formulas of modern science, these are, in the last analysis, no more than convenient symbols.

The symbols of a chemical formula are purely arbitrary. Those of a Tarot Key possess the added advantage that, being founded on laws of human mental activity—the same, yesterday, today and forever—the meaning of the symbols never can be wholly lost. It may be obscured

by misinterpretations, but whoever approaches Tarot or other forms of true esoteric symbolism in the right way cannot fail to recover their meaning. This is true because the symbols are part of the one universal human language—a language older than any human "tongue"—and this is the occult "speech" which is associated with Key 7.

To learn this language, we must learn to still our wagging tongues. To realize our actual omnipresence, we must stop identifying ourselves with our flesh-and-blood bodies. Before we may act magically, we must learn the art of being more receptive to the influx of power from higher and more interior levels. If we persist in this, the time will come when we shall **know** that our **one body** is the whole universe, and that our **One Self (pictured as the Charioteer) is no other than the Living Mind** which eternally creates and sustains the universe.

We recommend a very simple practical exercise. Begin by sitting still, and in that stillness, use every device imagination suggests to you to deepen your consciousness that your personality is maintained by a stream of vibrating influences **flowing into it and flowing out of it.** Try to see that all power is yours at every moment of your existence.

Then, when your consciousness is intensified by the first part of the practice, deliberately send out the same power from your personal center, and with it bless all other forms of existence whether they seem to be friendly or hostile, known or unknown. Follow the current of energy as it flows outward and bless all things and creatures **above** you. Follow it again, and bless all things and creatures **below.** As you do this, sit facing the East, and let your third blessing follow the outflowing current toward the East. Then send it in like manner to the West, to the North and to the South.

Let no sense of effort attend this exercise. You do not generate the current, and though some persons do shout over a telephone, be sure you do not follow their bad example. Your part is to send the message of blessing in all six directions. Blessing, because this includes every possible good—healing, harmony, peace and all else. Begin your day with this. Let it be your last practice before going to bed.

CORRESPONDENCES — CUBE OF SPACE

Hebrew Letter		Tarot Key	Direction
א	Aleph	THE FOOL	Coordinate connecting Above with Below
ב	Beth	THE MAGICIAN	Above
ג	Gimel	HIGH PRIESTESS	Below
ד	Daleth	THE EMPRESS	**East**
ה	Heh	THE EMPEROR	North East
ו	Vav	HIEROPHANT	South East
ז	Zain	THE LOVERS	East Above
ח	Cheth	THE CHARIOT	East Below
ט	Teth	STRENGTH	North Above
י	Yod	THE HERMIT	North Below
כ	Kaph	WHEEL OF FORTUNE	**West**
ל	Lamed	JUSTICE	North West
מ	Mem	HANGED MAN	Coordinate connecting East with West
נ	Nun	DEATH	South West
ס	Samekh	TEMPERANCE	West Above
ע	Ayin	THE DEVIL	West Below
פ	Peh	THE TOWER	**North**
צ	Tzaddi	THE STAR	South Above
ק	Qoph	THE MOON	South Below
ר	Resh	THE SUN	**South**
ש	Shin	JUDGEMENT	Coordinate connecting North with South
ת	Tav	THE WORLD	**Center**

THE FIVE FINALS—THE DIAGONALS

All Five Finals extend upwards from the bottom of the Cube and pass through the Center.

ך	Final Kaph	South East lower corner, through center, to North West upper corner.
ן	Final Nun	North East lower corner, upward through center to the South West upper corner.
ף	Final Peh	South West lower corner, upward through center to upper North East corner.
ץ	Final Tzaddi	North West lower corner, through center, to upper South East corner.
ם	Final Mem	Center of Cube, point of perfect equilibrium and stillness.

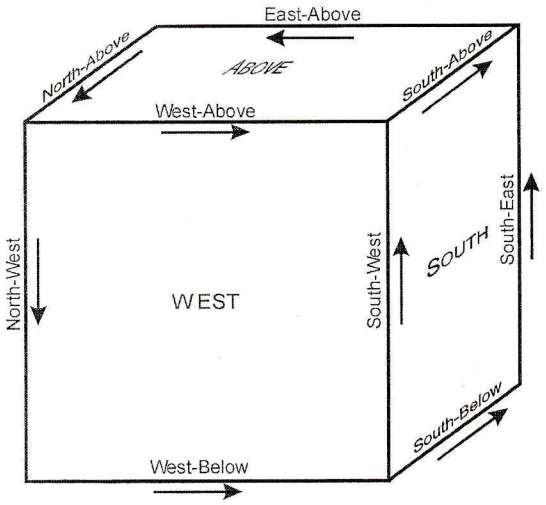

Figure 1 represents the cube of space viewed from the West, showing the Above, West and South faces. The boundary lines are named and arrows show the direction of the current flowing in each line.

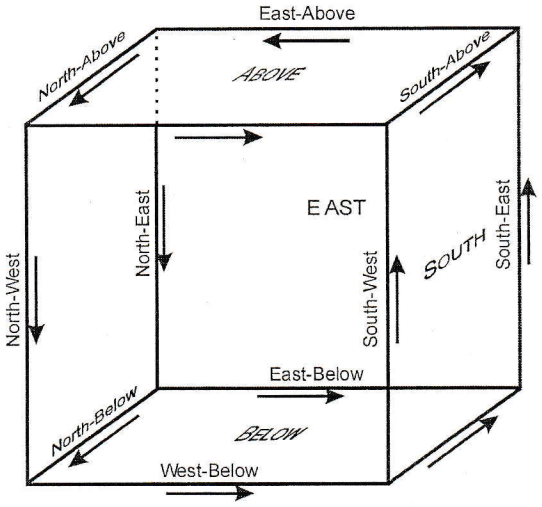

Figure 2 shows the Below, North, and East faces, together with boundary lines North-below, East-below, and North-east which are omitted from figure 1.

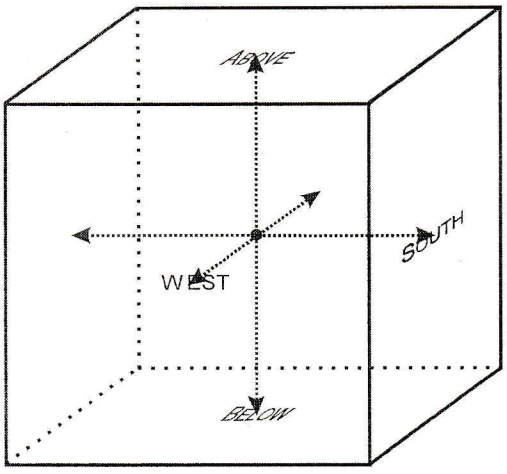

Figure 3 represents the three coordinates by dotted lines from the Above to Below, from East to West, and from North to South. To these three lines, are assigned three Mother Hebrew letters.

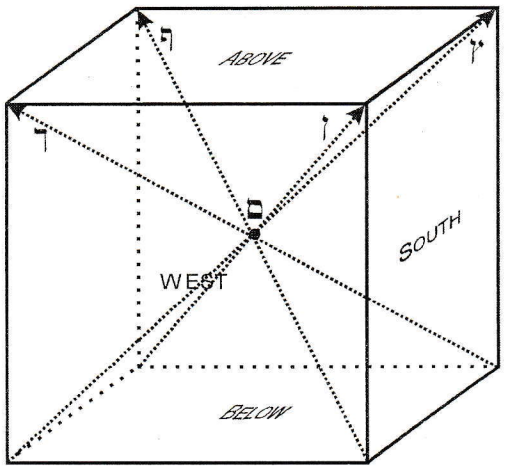

Figure 4 represents the 4 diagonal lines, the direction of the currents associated with them and the final Hebrew letter attributed to them. Note the Final Mem shares with the seventh, double letter Tav, an association with the Center.